

Washington State Patrol Media Release

Chief Lowell Porter



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WSP Launches “Most Wanted” Web Site

Today, the Washington State Patrol launched a Web site with the hope that it will help lead to the capture of those with felony warrants issued for their arrests. The Web site, www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/wanted.htm, highlights those persons still being sought for vehicular homicides, hit-and-runs, or vehicular assaults.

During 2003, State Patrol detectives investigated 178 felony collisions statewide. Of these 178 collisions:

- 45 were Vehicular Homicides where one or more of our citizens died as a result of someone else driving drunk, recklessly, or with a disregard for the safety of others;
- 112 were Vehicular Assaults in which one or more persons were seriously injured by someone else driving drunk, recklessly, or with a disregard for the safety of others; and
- 21 of these collisions were Felony Hit-and-Runs in which one or more persons were injured and the causing driver fled the scene.

Each of these 178 crimes resulted in death or serious injury. Said WSP Chief Lowell Porter, “To a person that loses a loved one, or has a loved one hospitalized, the pain is no different than if the death or injury were by any other criminal act, because the result is the same.”

“We are seeking help from the public to find these people who have fled police and have left numerous families with pain, loss, and grief,” explained Captain Brian Ursino of the WSP Criminal Investigation Division. “We want to call attention to this resource for the public’s use and information. We want the families to know we have not forgotten the pain they are living and to know we are working tirelessly to bring these people to justice,” he said.

In September 2003, there were 31 suspects that were wanted on felony collision charges dating back as far as 1993. The suspects, victims, and the victim’s families have not had their day in court. The pain to the victims and their families is compounded by the knowledge that the suspect has evaded justice.

Since the WSP began its aggressive warrant apprehension program in September, 11 of these suspects have been tracked down and arrested:

- We got one extradited from California with the assistance of the U.S. Marshal's Service;
- We have another suspect in jail in Denver right now awaiting transport back to Yakima to answer charges for a Felony Hit-and-Run collision that occurred in 1997; and
- Just last Thursday, another suspect that we wanted for a Vehicular Assault that occurred in Walla Walla County in 2002 was tracked to Idaho by our detectives. She was persuaded to turn herself in and is currently in the Walla Walla County Jail awaiting trial.

There are 25 suspects still at large. In an effort to bring these criminals to justice and some form of closure to the victims and their families, the WSP is seeking the public's help in finding these remaining 25 suspects.

Please visit our site at www.wsp.wa.gov and click on the "**WSP's Most Wanted**" button on the lower left side of the screen, or go directly to www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/wanted.htm.

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